

MEETING OF
THE DELAWARE AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

A meeting of the Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation Foundation was held at the Delaware Department of Agriculture, 2320 S. DuPont Hwy. Dover, Delaware, August 13, 2008, with the following members in attendance:

Robert F. Garey, Chairman	Michael T. Scuse, Secretary of Agriculture
William Vanderwende, Vice Chairman	Jack Markell, State Treasurer
Lyn Davenport, Secretary	Theodore P. Bobola, Jr.
Allen Messick, Jr., Treasurer	

Absent: G. Ray Staats, Joseph Wick, and Kevin Coyle (representative for the Hon. John Hughes.)

The following staff members were in attendance: Scott Blaier, Howard Mesick, Milton Melendez, Danielle Klosowski, and Robin West.

Others in attendance: F. Michael Parkowski, Deputy Principal Assistant Mark Davis, and Mr. Michael Brown.

Chairman Garey opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. with prayer.

I. Progress Report:

Milton Melendez informed the Board that we have a total of 980 farms in preservation districts totaling 148,443 acres, with a total of 504 farms under agricultural easements totaling 87,988 acres at a cost of \$149,991,592. For PDR 14 there are a total of 145 farms comprising 13,950 acres with a value of \$149,250,000 to be considered for purchase of development rights; and for PDR 15 there are a total of 10 farms comprising 612 acres with a value of \$10,068,000. For the Forestland Preservation program, there are 28 forestland preservation areas, totaling 2,265 acres. Currently being appraised for our first PDR Forestland round is a total of 24 forestland preservation areas with a total acreage of 2,131.

Chairman Garey asked about the number of farms in the Preservation program. Staff assured the Chairman that we should soon be reaching 1,000 farms and we would take note of that when it happens. Michael McGrath mentioned our goal was having one half of all the agricultural land in Delaware in preservation Districts, and that we would like to permanently preserve half of that figure. And we have about 50% of the acreage in our program in permanent preservation right now, which is a better record than any other State in the USA.

Milton Melendez informed the Board that FRPP through NRCS has increased the amount of Federal funding from \$5.2M to \$6.2M, which we were pleased to be able to accept for PDR 14. Secretary Scuse praised our NRCS office; they are the best that this State has ever had. They have fought for Federal funding for our program and are the best we have ever dealt with. Mike Parkowski suggested that we invite their boss from Washington D.C. for a special recognition of them. William Vanderwende mentioned that we have the highest EQIP funds per population of any State in the Union, and that John Hall and Russell Morgan was responsible. Secretary Scuse mentioned the help John Hall gave to the Nutrient Management Program with Federal funds. Chairman Garey directed staff to recognize the work of the State NRCS office.

II. Public Comments – No public comments were received.

III. Minutes - Chairman Garey asked if there were additions or corrections to the July 9, 2008 minutes. Lyn Davenport requested that the minutes reflect that he approved the motion for the Financial Report, not that he approved the Report and would like that sentence rephrased. **Theodore P. Bobola, Jr. moved the minutes be approved with the correction requested by Lyn Davenport, seconded by Lyn Davenport. Motion unanimously approved.**

IV. Financial Highlights:

Howard Mesick informed the Foundation Board that we had to close our Foundation checkbook which has resulted in a change in the format of our monthly Financial Statement. The FY'09 Bond Bill specified that the Foundation could no longer have funds outside of the State system. The total amount of current assets, which includes the funds from our checking account, is shown in page one of the Financial Statement, in the amount of \$130,893.70. On page two of the Financial Statement we have interest income of \$0.06 and income from our license plate of \$595.00 and our expenses for the month of July were \$18,672.50. Our net income was \$18,077.50. There are now fewer pages to review and I hope that this makes it more understandable to the Board.. After discussion, **Lyn Davenport moved to accept the Financial Report as presented, seconded by Allen Messick, Jr. Motion unanimously approved.**

Howard Mesick presented a memorandum dated August 12, 2008, requesting transfers of funds from one account to another. There was no change in the over all budgeted amounts. After discussion, **Jack Markell moved to accept the transfers of funds from one account to another from the memorandum dated August 12, 2008, seconded by Lyn Davenport. Motion unanimously approved.**

V. Executive Session – There was no need for an Executive Session.

VI. Other Business:

1. Federal Irrigation Grant – Mark Davis.

Secretary Scuse explained about the funding for irrigation systems in Delaware. If we provide cost share for irrigation systems in Delaware it will help with the preservation of farmland, as farmers will make a profit and it will also reduce the nutrient run off which pollutes the inland bays area as well as the Chesapeake.

\$250,000 from our Congressional Delegation for the pilot project with U of DE to show that irrigation systems in Delaware will not only make farming more profitable, thus preserving farmland, but will also improve the quality of the inland bays and the Chesapeake by reducing runoff. Want to target this money in the inland bays area and the Chesapeake Bay area to farms that are permanently protected and preserved. Need Mike Parkowski to do some legislation that would allow us to target that area. Secretary Scuse also wants to go after some of the \$400,000 which is targeted for the Chesapeake Bay Initiative in the Farm Bill. Mark Davis informed the Board that there is a 50/50 cost share for the initiative and it is limited to \$50,000.00 per application to spread out the money. Can only use EQIP to retro fit, but not for new systems in this area of the Country. Secretary Scuse asked that that be looked into because it may not be true.

2. Oasis at Cypress Ridge Expansion of the McNatt-Outten District, ID#N-08-06-180C. Milton Melendez the Board that is expansion is really not effective, as we have not received a signed District Agreement from the owner of record. The landowner is still interested in the program, but he is still thinking about it. The owner does understand that this application will be on hold until we receive a signed agreement.

3. Change of Meeting Schedule

Vice Chairman Vanderwende asked that the Board consider changing the meeting schedule to once every other month. Michael Parkowski state that he would need to check the statute to see if that could be done, but the Foundation should have the flexibility to decide not to hold a meeting if there is not a full agenda..

4. Funding for the Counties

Mention was made about the County funding for PDR 13, and the fact that Sussex County did not provide funding for PDR 13.

VII. Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the Foundation, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m. The next meeting of the Foundation will be held on September 10, 2008 at the Delaware Department of Agriculture, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyn Davenport
Secretary